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CLAIMS

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1. An immobiliser device for immobilising a vehicle locomotive by water, the device comprising a housing in which there is stored, in an unextended state, an elongate flexible fouling element which, in use, is designed to foul the propeller and/or motor of a target vessel, means for automatically ejecting the fouling element from the housing, means for ensuring the fouling element is maintained in an extended state once ejected from the housing, characterised in that the fouling element is supported by an inflatable member which is stowed in the housing in a deflated condition, and in that the device further comprises a source of compressed gas releasably connected to the inflatable member in the housing and for inflating the inflatable member so that it floats on water, the inflatable member having, in an inflated condition, the elongate flexible fouling element disposed therearound.

2. An immobiliser device according to claim 1, wherein a weight is attached to the fouling element so that in use drag force of the water on the weight ensures that the fouling element is maintained in an extended state.

3. An immobiliser device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein there is provided a valve between the source of compressed gas and the inflatable member, the valve being opened so as to allow inflation of the inflatable member by removal of a pin from the housing.

4. An immobiliser device according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the inflatable member is stored in the deflated condition in the form of a wound coil.

5. An immobiliser device according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the housing contains more than one inflatable member, each member being connected to a common supply of compressed gas.

6. An immobiliser device according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein at least part of the fouling element is configured into a net construction.

7. An immobiliser device according to claim 6, wherein the net construction is supported by support members that extend from the inflatable member.

8. An immobiliser device according to any preceding claim, wherein the housing  comprises a capsule that is designed to be propelled from a launch tube.

9. An immobiliser device according to claim 8, wherein the capsule has a nose that contains the source of compressed gas.

10. An immobiliser device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the fouling element is attached to a projectile member that, in use, is discharged from the housing so as to carry the fouling element out of the housing.

11. An immobiliser device comprising at least one inflatable member around which is disposed an elongate flexible fouling element, the inflatable member being stored in an deflated condition and connected to a source of compressed gas via a gas distributor, and a valve in the gas distributor that is openable to allow communication between the source of compressed gas and the inflatable member.